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CEREBUS

MELMOTH

SEVEN

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146
MAY

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

February 25, 1991

Neil Gaiman
Somewhere in England

Dear Neil:

Well, what a lovely surprise.

Here I've been avoiding answering this month's fan mail and in comes your 24-hour comic which provides the perfect excuse to get started. Just to give you an idea of the synchronicity involved:

1) *The Note from the President in 146 is a Neil Gaiman special. It's not written yet but the rough outline is "first meeting—Savoy Hotel 1986. Neil as cub reporter for great metropolitan newspaper or some such. Asks good insightful questions so obviously is in wrong profession. Second meeting—Coventry convention—Neil as nouveau riche second wave Brit invasion gun-for-hire. 'Do you know how much they're paying me to write comics?' Concluding bit is, of course, THE Neil Gaiman, brilliant Sandman author, TABOO contributor, Books of Magic weaver, irritant in the fabric of the DC universe et. and cetera. Speculation that the Savoy suite was one of the infamous ones Oscar used to take his panthers to, though I didn't know enough about Wilde at the time to make note of the number. Looked up 'gamin' in the dictionary; 'a homeless youngster who wanders about the streets of a city or town.' Which makes your name something of a panther instruction; 'kneel, gamin' ".*

   Long way to go for a lousy pun, but that's very much like me.

2) *Here's your 24 hour comic chock a block full of Wilde. Can I print it in its entirety? I'd offer to pay but you second wave Brit invasion gun-for-hire lads leave larger gratuities in restaurants than I make in a month I'm sure.*

3) *I just saw you on telly last night. "Prisoners of Gravity" with Commander Rick. You ought to be ashamed, you ought.*

4) *The whole Note from the President thing got triggered by finding a photo of the interview at the Savoy which will be on the back cover of 146.*

Write if you get work.

Most sincerely,

Dave Sim
President, Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc.

A couple of days later Neil phoned to say that the "kneel, gamin" pun was absolutely atrocious (which it is). He said very nice things about my work. I said very nice things about his work. I mentioned that we never got *Sandman* 23 in our DC freebies and asked him to act it out over the phone. Well, he didn't think he'd do that, but he said he'd send one along in a care package with the Andy Warhol issue of *Miracleman* (which Steve Bissette had told me to buy and which I refused to buy because certain unnamed personages stood to profit from it) and his novel *Good Omens* which he wrote with Terry Pratchett (I believe Neil wrote all the vowels). He told me a few horror stories about Hollywood since *Good Omens* has been "optioned" or is "in development" or "turnaround" or is "set on puree" or something. I have to admit that I took a dim, Arthur Milleroid view of Mr. Gaiman going Hollywood until I read the first few pages and then I, like, you know, *got* it. It's an obscenely-lucrative sort of witicism. Like merchandising Michael Zulli's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. It verges on performance art or Living Theater or something.

Anyway Neil's 24 hour comic book (fourteen pages; but he's Neil Gaiman so we'll let it go) will appear in its entirety next issue; "Being an Account of the Life and Death of the Emperor Heliogabolus."

With a catchy title like that it *could* end up being his next screenplay.

★★★★★★★★★

Ger and I will be attending the Brant County Museum's exhibit "From *Freelance* to *Cerebus;* the Silver & Golden Ages of Canadian Comic Books" June 22nd with our old pals Chester Brown, Dave Ross and Dave Darrigo. Brant County Museum 57 Charlotte St., Brantford, Ontario. You can call the Museum at (519) 752-2483 for details. The exhibit runs from May 4th to August 24th.

CEREBUS

NO. 146 MAY 1991

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MELMOTH
a short story

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(Cerebus 139 to Cerebus 150)

Jnx_Scanz_HaCsA !!!

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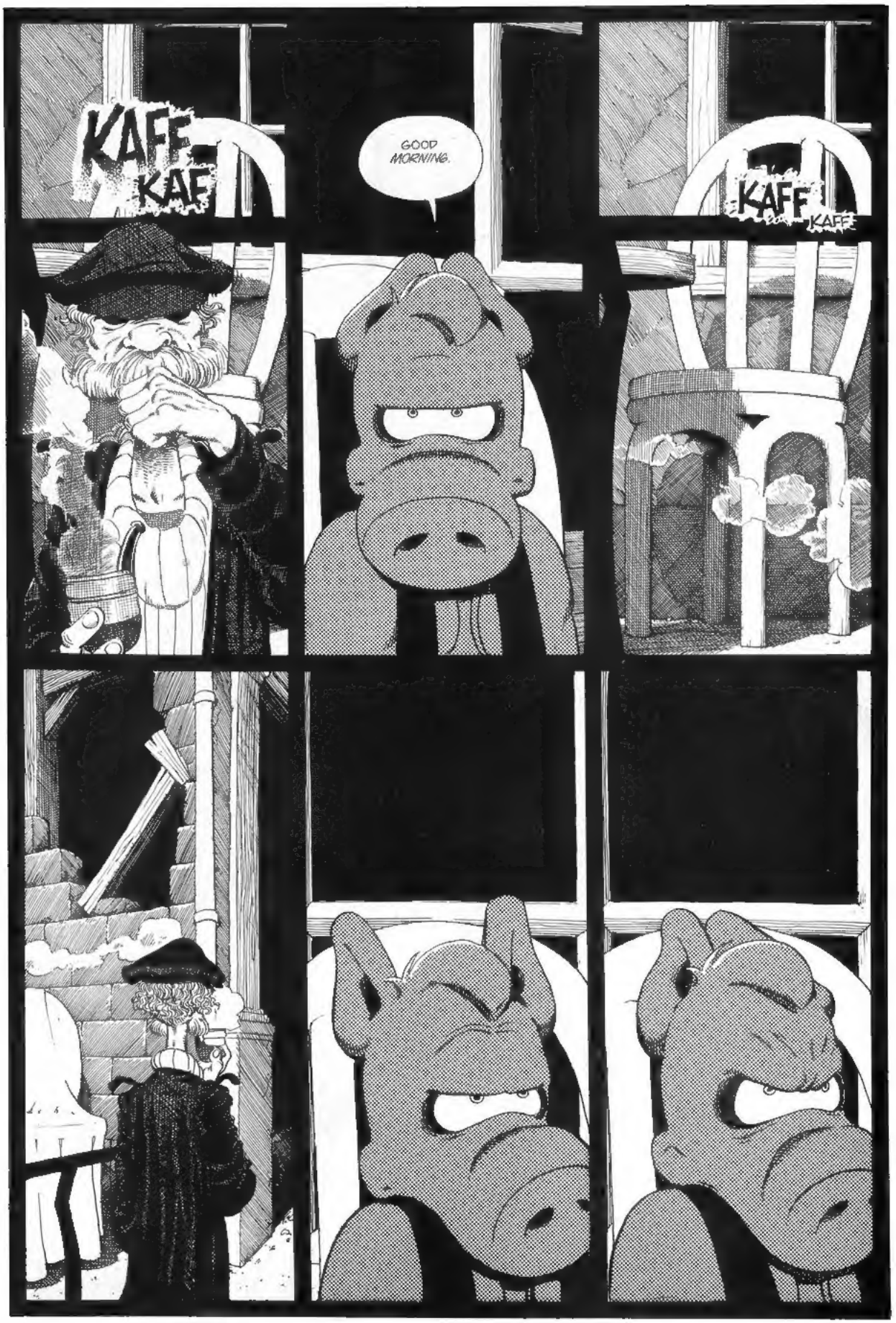
PRINTED IN CANADA

TINK
TINK TINK
FLIP!
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH


KAFF
KAFF
GOOD MORNING.
KAFF
KAFF

HEY
GOOD MORNING
OH!
ER
UH
GOOD MORNING.
TINK
TINK

My dear Robbie

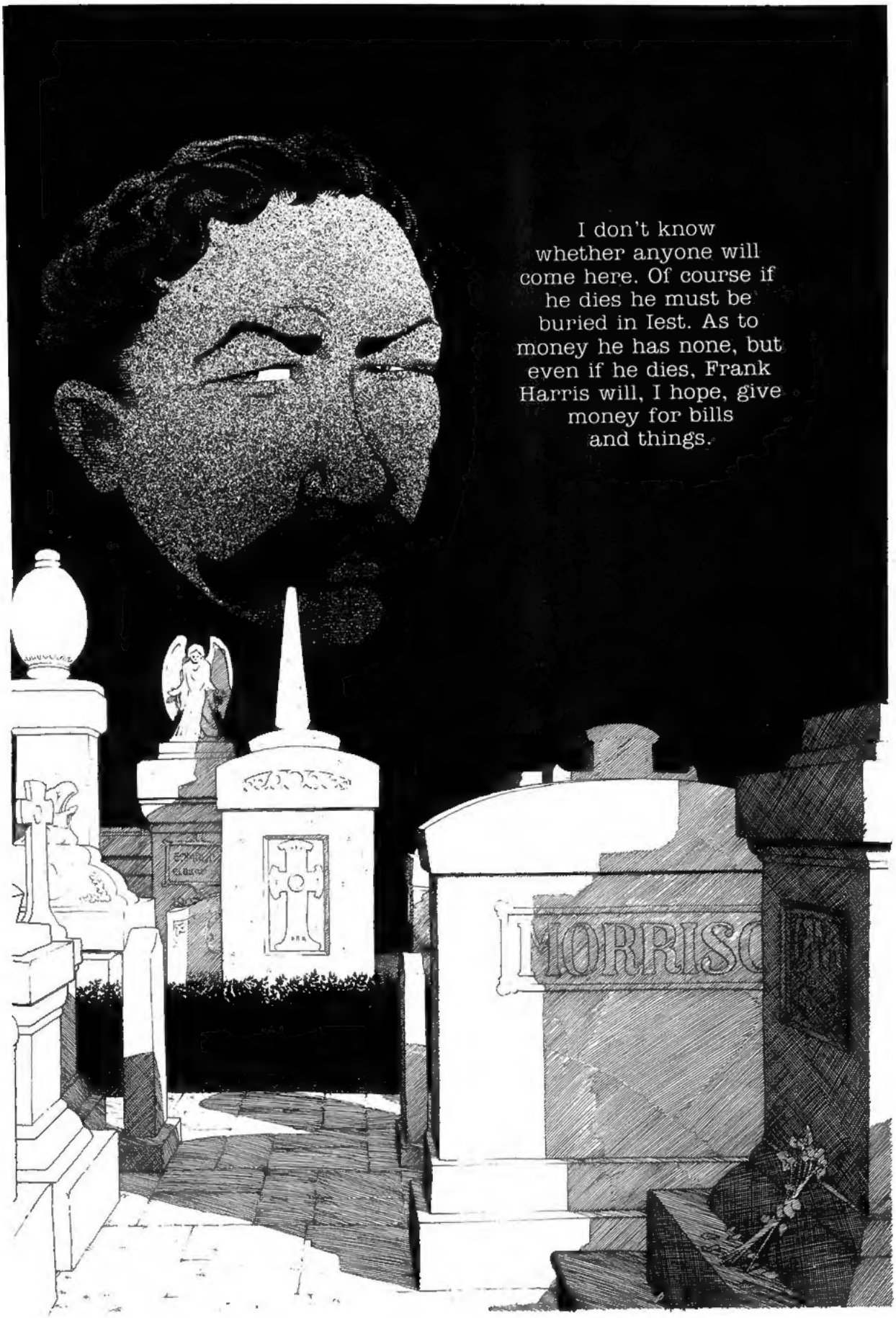
I'm afraid it's all over with Oscar. He has been delirious for two or three days and gets worse. This morning a consultation of doctors after which I sent my letter to you. Another consultation tomorrow.

If he is not better in three or four days
he will be dead.

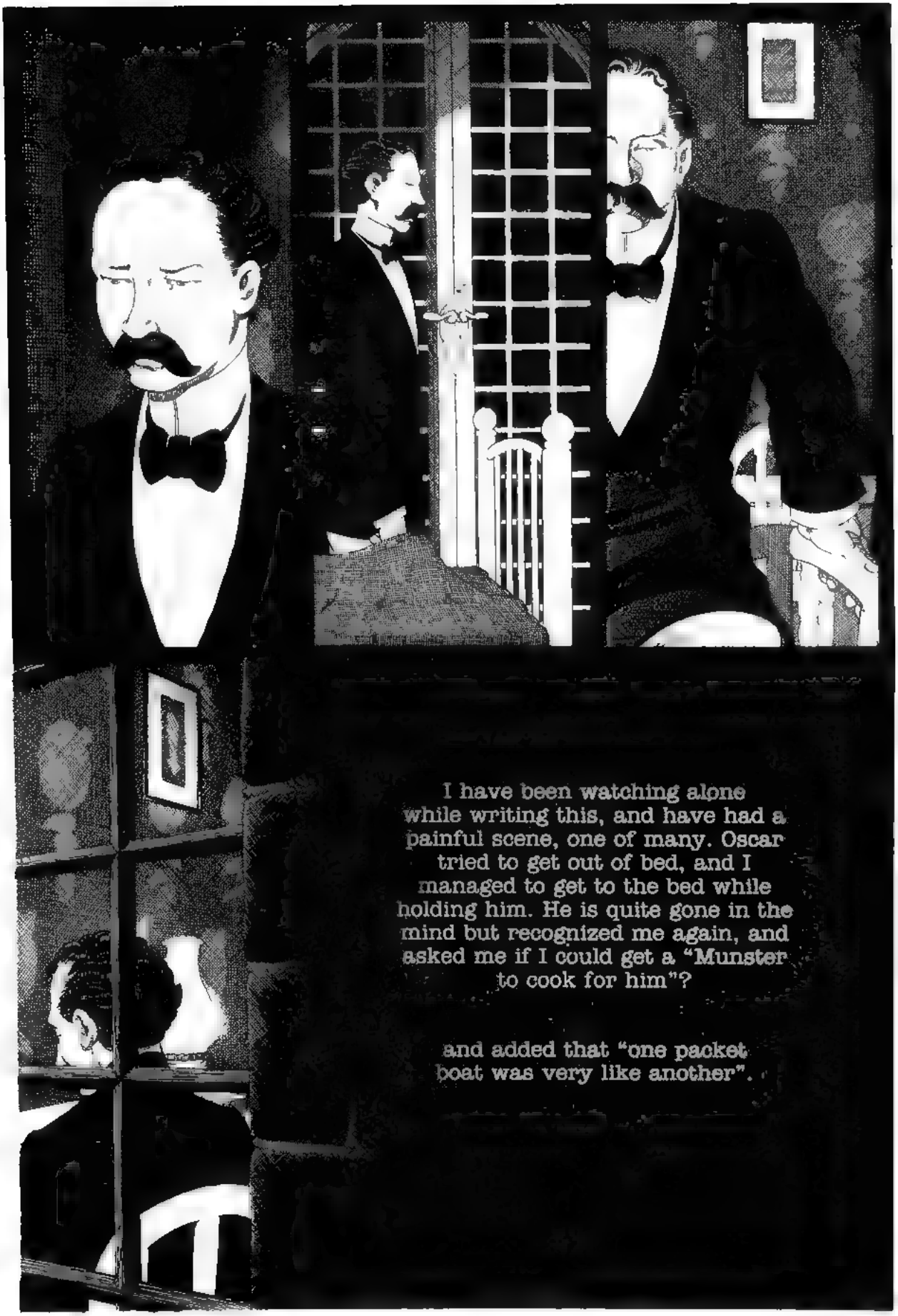
I sat with him
till early this
morning. He talks
nonsense the whole
while.

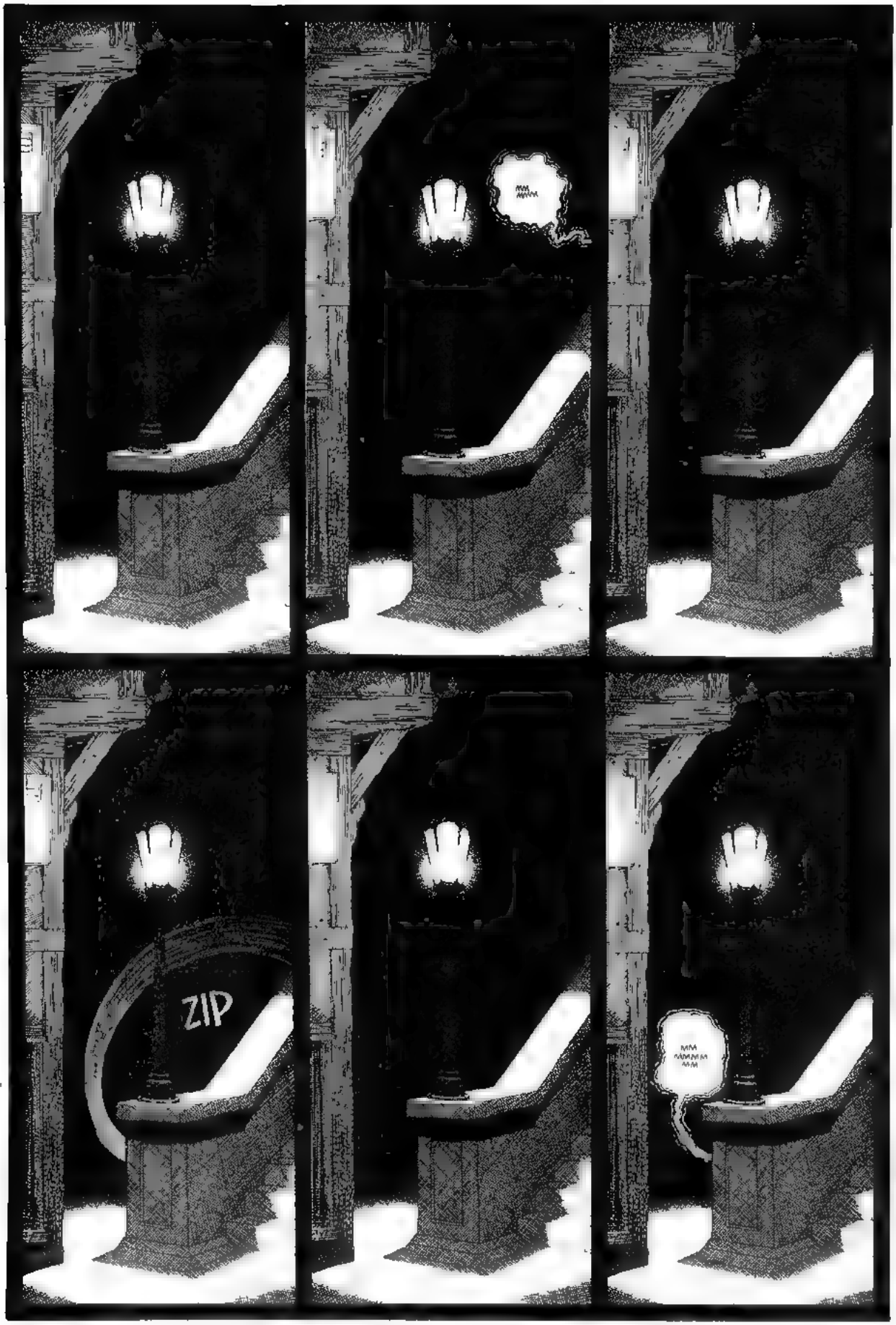
He recognizes one
more or less.

An operation is out of the question, as is set out in the doctors' statement. He takes no nourishment or hardly any. By turning the lights out and substituting milk for water I deceived him into drinking three glasses last night.

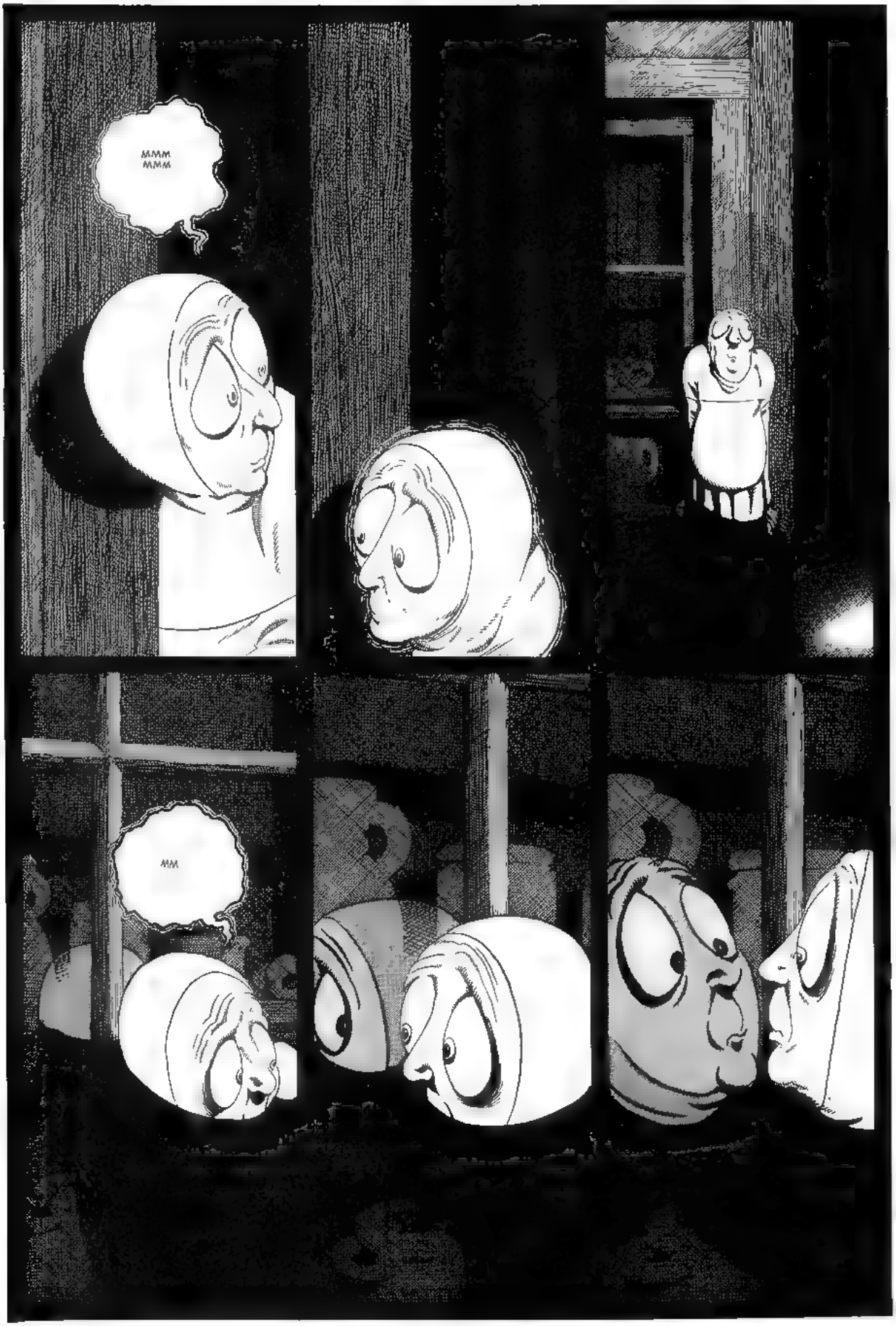

I don't know whether anyone will come here. Of course if he dies he must be buried in Iest. As to money he has none, but even if he dies, Frank Harris will, I hope, give money for bills and things.

It is very terrible to hear Oscar going on talking and be able to do nothing.

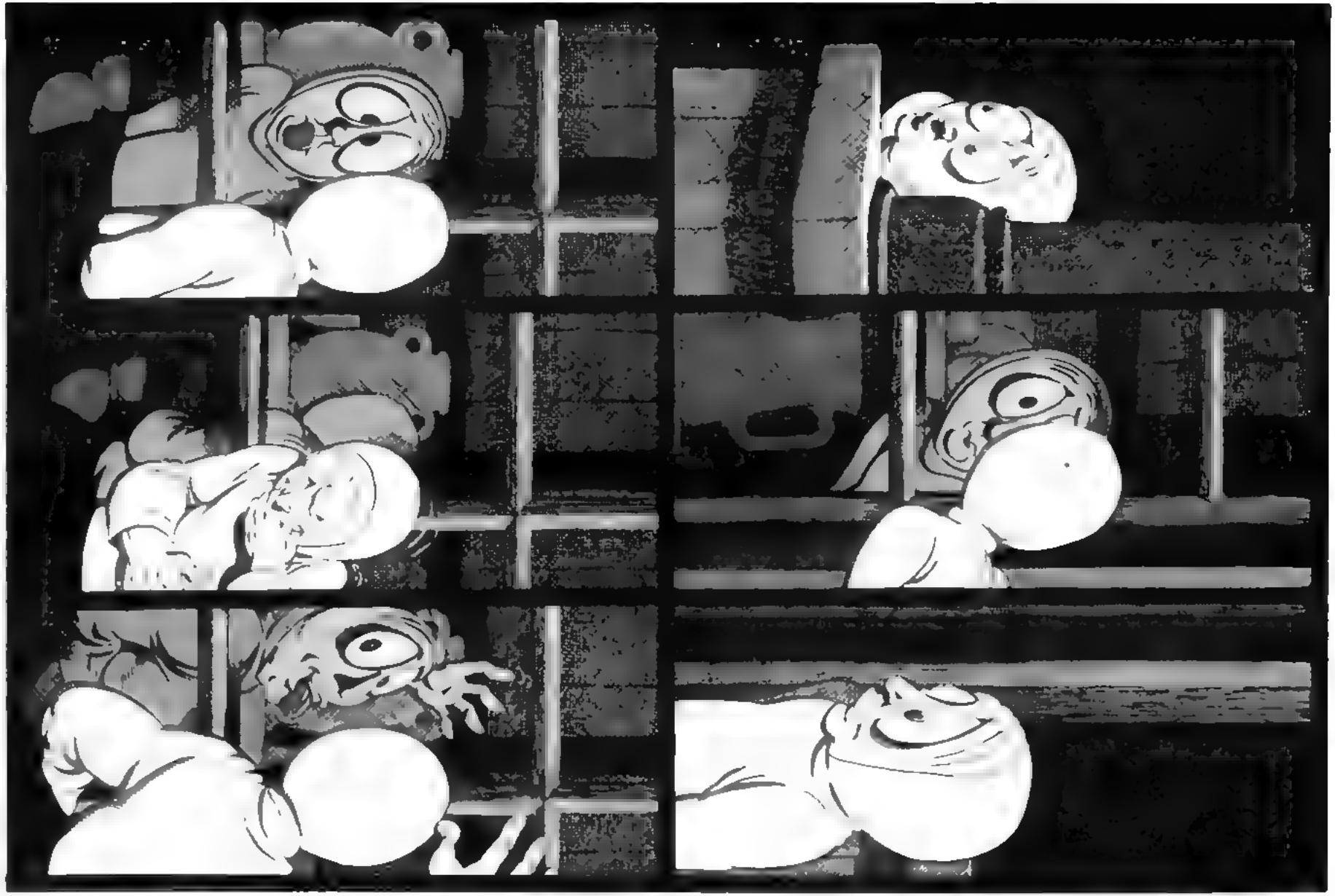

I have been watching alone while writing this, and have had a painful scene, one of many. Oscar tried to get out of bed, and I managed to get to the bed while holding him. He is quite gone in the mind but recognized me again, and asked me if I could get a "Munster to cook for him"?
and added that "one packet boat was very like another".

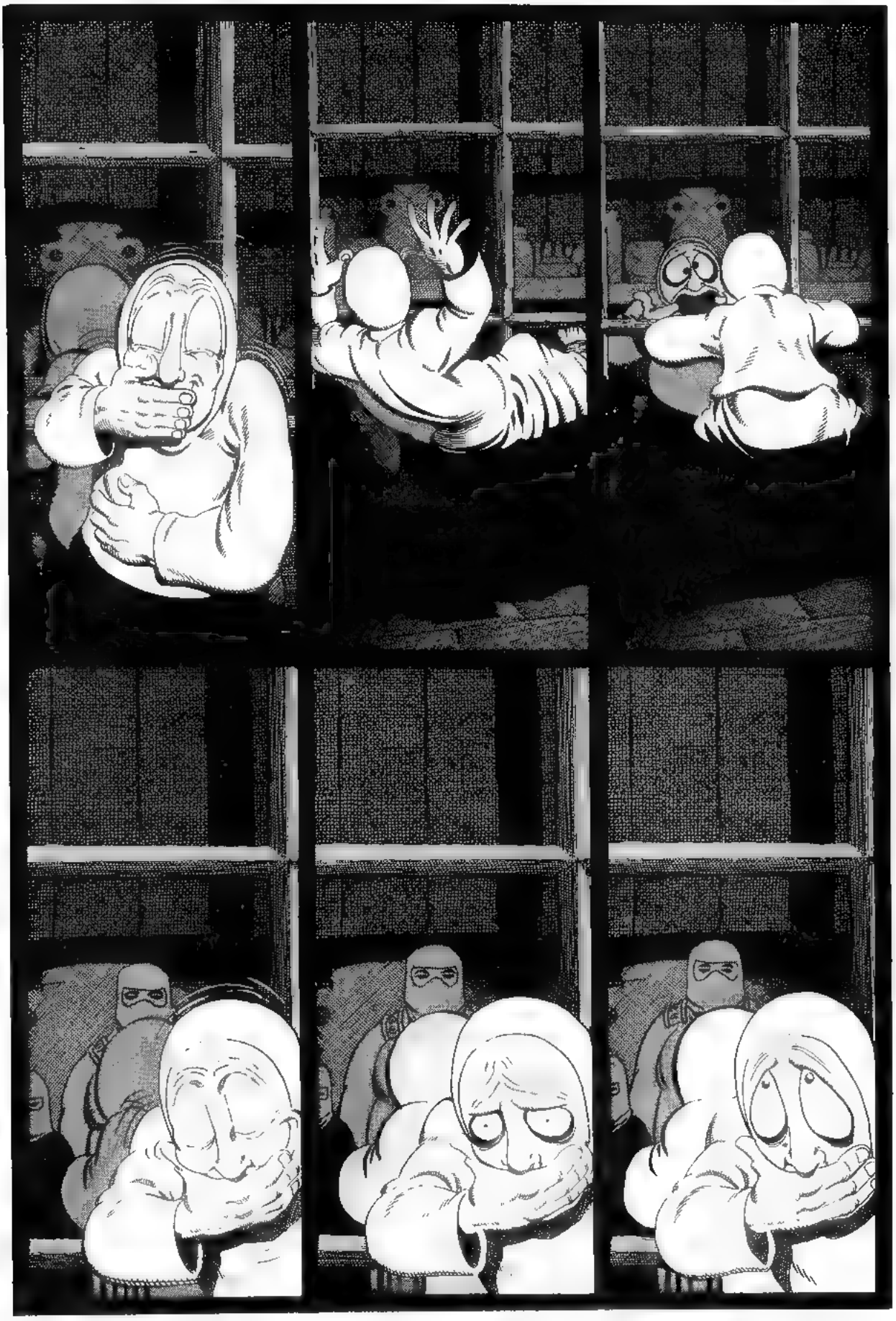

ZIP

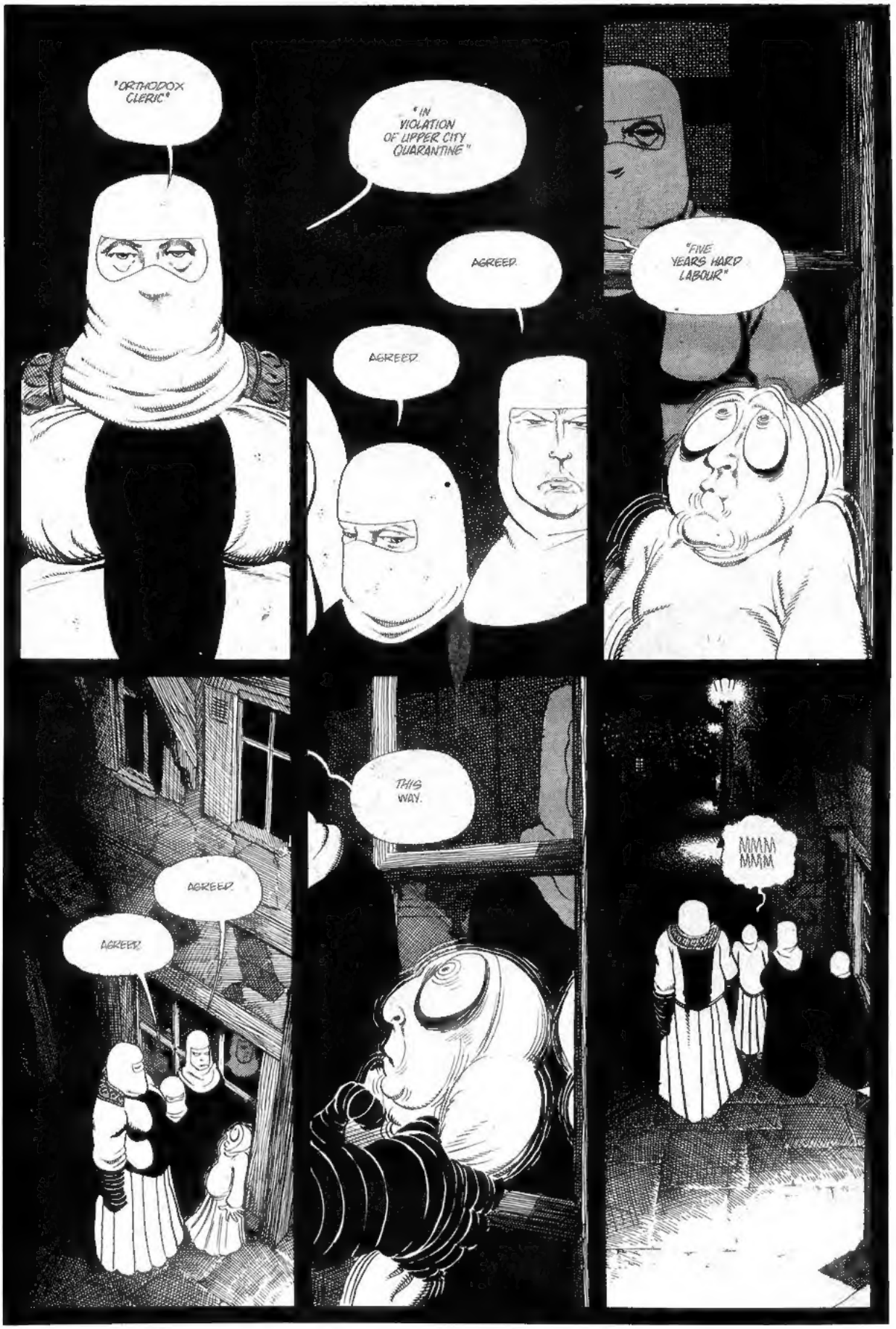
MM MM MMM
ZIP

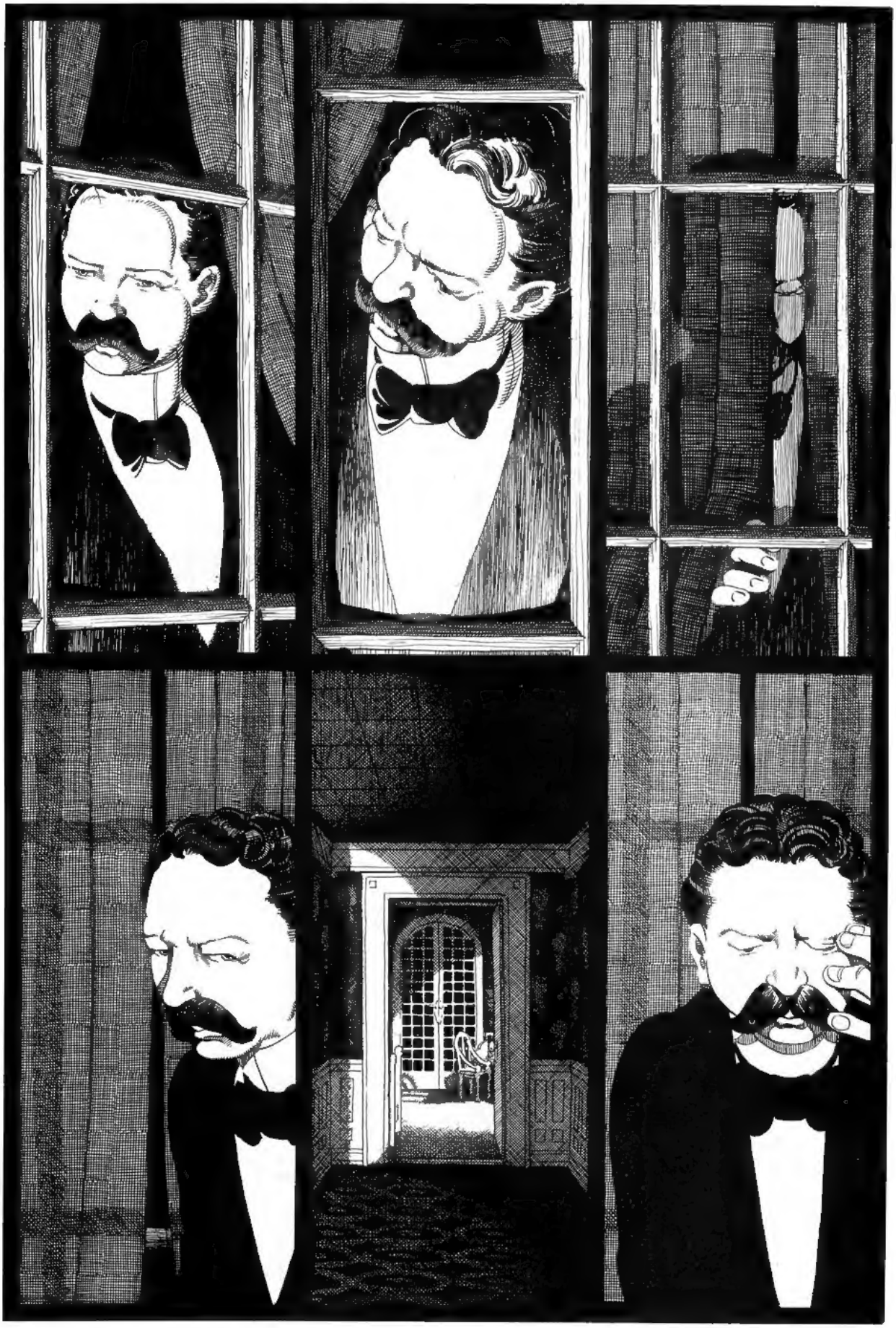

MMM
MMM
MM

ZIP
POUND
POUND
POUND
POUND
MMM
MMM
POUND
POUND
MMM
POUND
POUND





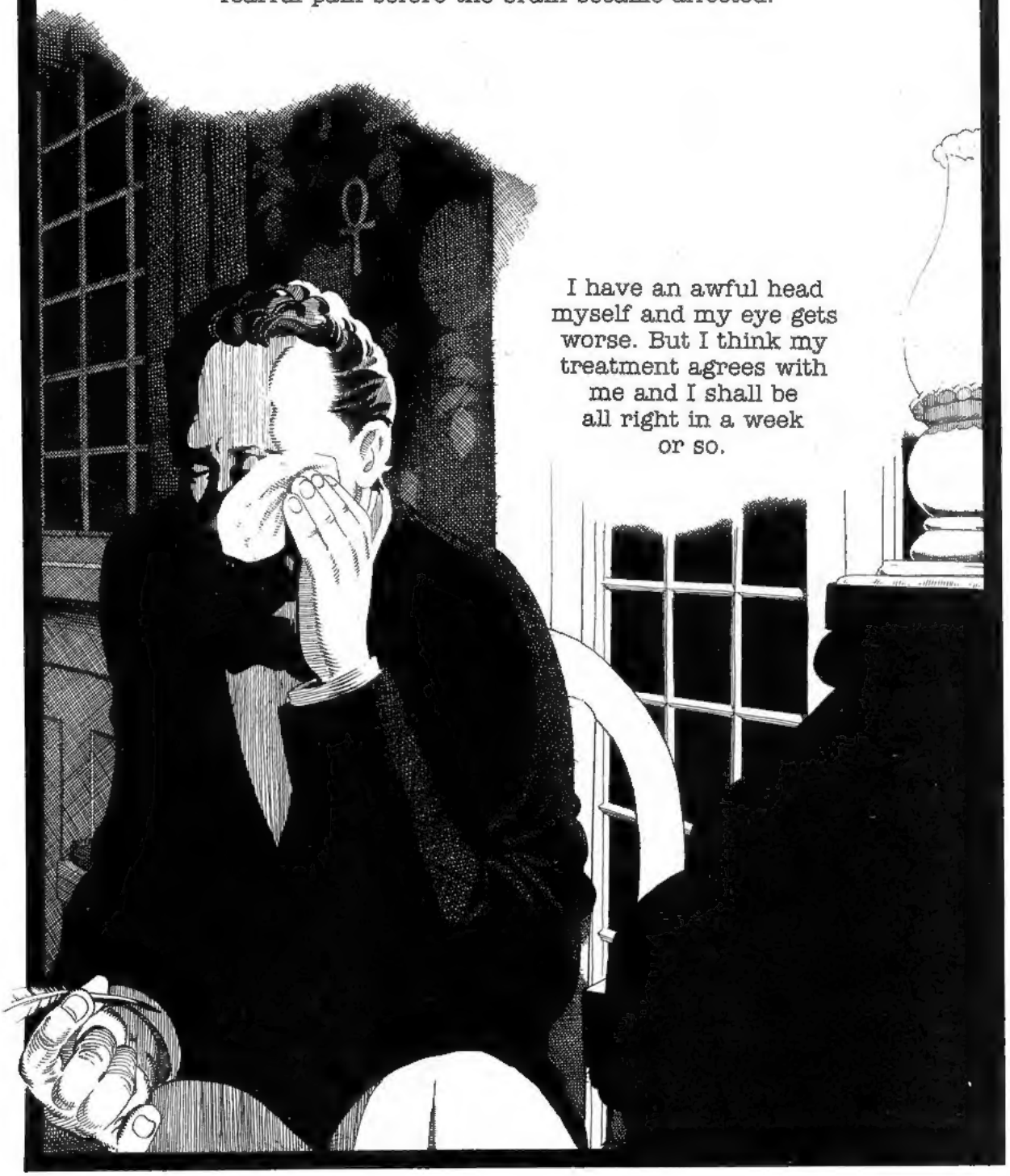

"ORTHODOX CLERIC"
"IN VIOLATION OF UPPER CITY QUARANTINE"
AGREED.
AGREED.
"FIVE YEARS HARD LABOUR"
AGREED.
AGREED.
THIS WAY.
MMM MMM



I think the *garde malade* ought to have been here before, but Tucker is not very quick. I won't write more now.

Reg

I fear he suffers terribly but I suppose is unconscious of it. He must have had fearful pain before the brain became affected.



I have an awful head myself and my eye gets worse. But I think my treatment agrees with me and I shall be all right in a week or so.